(i) Extension of platforms no. 2 and 3 for 48 metres.

(ii) Improvement of station building face lifting and provision of waiting hall.

(iii) Remodeling of station building.

Extension of Sambalpur-Raipur express to Bhubaneswar

1185.SHRI PYARIMOHAN MOHAPATRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that a proposal has been given by the East Coast Railway to extend Sambalpur-Raipur Express upto Bhubaneswar; and

(b) if so, the reasons for not accepting the proposal in spite of the fact that there is no direct train linking the Capital of Orissa and Chhattisgarh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The proposal involves changes in the existing schedules of the train. The change may be resisted by the existing users. However, 3 pairs of trains viz. 8473/8474 Jaipur-Puri Express (weekly), 8405/8406 Ahmedabad-Puri Express (weekly) and 2145/2146 Lokmanya Tilak (Terminus)-Bhubaneswar Express (weekly) are already linking the Capitals of the two States.

Gauge Conversion in Rajasthan

†1186. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of narrow gauge rail lines in Rajasthan;

(b) whether any efforts are being made for gauge conversion of the said lines;

(c) if so, the target fixed to complete the gauge conversion works; and

(d) the progress made in this regard as on date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The narrow gauge rail lines in Rajasthan are as under:-

(i) Sirmuttra-Mohari-Dhaulpur.

(ii) Mohari-Tantpur.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) to (d) A survey for gauge conversion of Dhaulpur-Sirmuttra with extension upto Gangapur City was completed in 1997-98. As per survey report, the cost of construction of 144 kms. long line was assessed at Rs. 170 crore with a rate of return as (-) 1.87%. Due to unremunerative nature of the project, it was not considered feasible to take up the work. An updating survey has been included in the Budget 2004-05. The survey is likely to be completed during 2005-06.

Special train for Chhatt Pooja

1187. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for not providing the special trains on the occasion of Chhatt Pooja in Bihar and Eastern Uttar Pradesh;

(b) the total number of such trains made available at Delhi/New Delhi and other important railway stations;

(c) the expected number of devotees who were disappointed as a result thereof; and

(d) the decision taken by Government to fulfil such assurance in future in favour of devotees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) To cater to the needs of the passengers especially those of Bihar and Eastern Uttar Pradesh, on the occasion of Chhatt pooja, Indian Railways operated 150 special trains. Of these 120 trains were operated from Delhi/New Delhi station for various destinations including Patna, Howrah, Darbhanga, Allahbad, Faizabad, Lucknow, Rai Bareily etc. Indian Railways run special trains during festivals (like Durga Puja, Chhatt, Diwali etc.) and other peak seasons to clear extra rush of passengers. This is an annual feature. No separate statistics is maintained for those passengers, both in reserved and unreserved segments, who could not secure accommodation in trains.

Angul-Sukinda Railway line

1188. SHRI PYARIMOHAN MOHAPATRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for which a paltry sum of Rs. 10 lakh has been allocated in the current year for the proposed railway line from Angul to Sukinda